

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 000029 TOSEC 340184
ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 /017 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:PPERENYI:RVC

APPROVED BY S/PRS:PPERENYI

S/S-O: R. PERITO

-----022059Z 050526 /71

P 022037Z JAN 77 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 000029 TOSEC 340184

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL, JANUARY 2, 1977

FOLLOWING IS NYTIMES ARTICLE BY C. L. SULZBERGER, "A
DIALOGUE EVEN OF THE DEAF", DATELINED TRIPOLI. NOT LONG
AFTER JIMMY CARTER WON THE ELECTION, COL. MUAMMAR EL-
QADDAFI, PRESIDENT OF THE LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC, CABLED
HIM OFFERING "TO FOSTER RELATIONS OF COOPERATION" WITH
THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

COLONEL QADDAFI, WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF LIBYA' REVOLUTION-
ARY COMMAND COUNCIL, STRESSED CARTER'S "CALL FOR THE
OBSERVANCE OF SPIRITUAL VALUES." HE HOPED THIS WOULD LEAD
TO AN ATTITUDE "BASED ON EQUAL FOOTING AND MUTUAL RESPECT"
HELPING "THE CAUSE OF PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE."

WARMER RELATIONSHIPS WOULD CERTAINLY CONSTITUTE A CHANGE;
RIGHT NOW THEY ARE LIMITED AND COLD...

(COLUMN MENTIONS NATIONALIZATION, CLOSURE OF WHEELUS,
LIMITED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND ISOLATION OF AMERICAN
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 000029 TOSEC 340184

COMMUNITY.)

HOWEVER, RECENTLY TRIPOLI HAS TAKEN AN INITIATIVE
TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. IT PROPOSED OPENING A DIALOGUE,
ENDING NUMERICAL RESTRICTION OF EMBASSY STAFFS, AND
EXCHANGING AMBASSADORS. IT EVEN NAMED A NEW ENVOY TO
AMERICA BUT HE WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY WASHINGTON WHICH, ON

ITS PART, MADE NO MOVE TO RECIPROCATE.

MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH LIBYA WISHED TO BUY UNITED STATES ARMS AND AN INITIAL PURCHASE OF EIGHT LOCKHEED C-130 TRANSPORTS WAS PAID FOR, WASHINGTON BLOCKED THEIR EXPORT. THE "DIALOGUE" OFFER WAS COLD-SHOULDERED. WE DO HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF COMMERCIAL BUSINESS HERE, BUYING ONE-FOURTH OF LIBYA'S OF OIL AND SELLING MUCH AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT; BUT DIPLO-MATIC BUSINESS IS STALLED.

I DISCUSSED ALL THIS AT LENGTH WITH COLONEL QADDAFI IN A BEDOUIN TENT OUTSIDE THIS CITY. OUR CONVERSATION WAS INTERPRETED BY DR. TAHAR SHERIF BIN-AMIR, MINISTER OF STATE TO THE PRESIDENCY, BUT QADDAFI, WHO SPEAKS CON-SIDERABLE ENGLISH, OCCASIONALLY INTERRUPTED IN THAT LANGUAGE AND ANSWERED MOST QUESTIONS WITHOUT AWAITING TRANSLATION INTO ARABIC.

THE NUB OF WHAT HE SAID WAS THIS: "I BELIEVE IN DIALOGUE AS A MEANS OF UNDERSTANDING. WE ARE READY FOR A DIALOGUE; THE HIGHER ITS LEVEL, THE MORE EFFECTIVE THE RESULT. BUT THIS CAN BE GRADUALLY APPROACHED. THE RIPE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER TAKES OVER. I AM RELATIVE-LY OPTIMISTIC."

NEVERTHELESS, BURNING ISSUES STILL SEPARATE THE TWO COUNTRIES. COLONEL QADDAFI RESENTS WASHINGTON'S ASSERTION THAT HE ENCOURAGES TERRORISM ABROAD, FROM THE MIDDLE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 000029 TOSEC 340184

EAST TO NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE PHILIPPINES. "WE ARE THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD WITH A STIFF LAW AGAINST TERRORISM," HE INSISTS.

HE ACKNOWLEDGES CONTINUED MORAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE I.R.A. IN ULSTER BECAUSE THAT IS "AN INTEGRAL PART OF IRELAND AND THE IRISH NATION IS DIFFERENT FROM THE ENGLISH NATION. WHY, EVEN SCOTLAND NOW WANTS ITS INDEPENDENCE. BUT WE GIVE ONLY MORAL AND POLITICAL--NOT MATERIAL--BACKING AS WE DO TO OTHER JUST CAUSES."

THE MOST TROUBLESOME POINT IS ISRAEL. COLONEL QADDAFI STRONGLY OPPOSES AMERICAN POLICY THERE. ...

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(ARTICLE DESCRIBES QADDAFI'S EXTREME POSITION.)

THERE SEEMS LITTLE ROOM FOR COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE
AMERICAN AND LIBYAN VIEWS ON THIS--NO MORE UNDER CARTER
THAN UNDER FORD. BUT THIS SHOULD NOT PREVENT THE DIALOGUE
QADDAFI SEEKS.

ON THE CONTRARY, WERE WE TO END OUR AMBASSADORIAL BOYCOTT
AND SEND A NEW ENVOY, ULTIMATELY BEGINNING FRANK TALKS,
IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DISAGREE ON ISRAEL WHILE FINDING
COMMON GROUND ON CERTAIN OTHER ISSUES.

IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO HAVE AMBASSADORS IN COUNTRIES
WHERE WE HAVE PROBLEMS THAN IN LANDS WHERE EVERYTHING
IS ROSES. DISPATCHING AN ENVOY TO A CAPITAL WHICH
WE HAVE POOR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IS NOT A SIGN OF
APPROVAL--BUT OF INTEREST AND CONCERN.

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PAGE 04 STATE 000029 TOSEC 340184

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 02-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE000029
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PPERENYI:RVC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770001-0786
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770186/aaaacxko.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 05e8e4dd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3675642
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL, JANUARY 2, 1977 FOLLOWING IS NYTIMES ARTICLE BY C. L. SULZBERGER, "A DIALOGUE EVEN OF THE DEAF", DATED LINE TRIPOLI. NO
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, US, LY, NEW YORK TIMES, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (CARTER, JIMMY), (SULZBERGER, C L), (QADHAFI, MUAMMAR)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/05e8e4dd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009